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ABSTRACT

Recent research conducted by neurologists and educators shows a strong link between emotion and reason. The role of emotion has been addressed in various ways in the fields of adult education and training, career education and development, and career and technical education (CTE). The term "emotional intelligence" (EI) is generally used to describe the ability to process, understand, and use emotions effectively. In the fields of training, career development, and CTE, EI has been connected to job skills training, leadership development, team development, and organizational development and learning. The need to connect the emotional to other domains or skills and competencies under development is an underlying theme in the literature on EI. In adult education, "emotional intelligence and intuitive understanding" has been identified as an alternative form of thinking that stands in contrast to the traditional rational forms of intelligence and understanding. Research has demonstrated how ignoring or attending to emotions can affect the outcomes of training. The career development literature has connected emotion to career change, career interventions, and job search. Additional exploration and development of the question of how emotions affect learning in adult education, career education, and CTE is clearly needed. (A 22-item annotated bibliography constitutes approximately 75% of this document.) (MN)

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Effect of Emotions on Learning in Adult, Career, and Career-Technical Education

by Susan Imel
2003

In education, as in many other fields, the rational mode of thinking has tended to prevail; thus, the role of emotions in learning has been largely ignored until recently. "But, recent research conducted by neurologists and educators shows a strong link between emotion and reason, feelings and thoughts—thereby disproving the adage that emotion is the enemy of reason" (Weiss 2000, p. 45). In the fields of adult education and training, career education and development, and career and technical education, the role of emotion has been addressed in a variety of ways. This *Alert* examines some of the trends and issues associated with the literature and provides resources for further information.

Emotional intelligence (EI), a concept that was popularized by Goleman (1995), is generally used to describe the ability to process, understand, and use emotions effectively (Cobb and Mayer 2000). In the fields of training, career development, and career-technical education, EI has been connected to job skills training (Houghton and Proscio 2001), leadership development (Dearborn 2002), team development (Druskat and Wolff 2001), and organizational development and learning (Callahan and McCollum 2001; Gabriel and Griffiths 2002). An underlying theme in the literature on EI is the need to connect the emotional to other domains or skills and competencies under development.

In adult education, the role of emotions in adult learning is an area that has received attention, particularly as contrasted to rational and instrumental ways of learning. Both Dirkx (2000) and Taylor (1996), for example, counter the prevailing views of transformative learning that emphasize rational and cognitive processes by highlighting the part played by emotions in transforming meaning perspectives. Leicester (2001) identifies the characteristic "emotional intelligence and intuitive understanding" as an alternative form of thinking, which is contrasted with the traditional rational forms.

How emotions affect training has been described by Dwyer (2001) and Short (2001). Using two training programs as examples, Short demonstrates how ignoring or attending to emotions can affect the outcome of training, whereas Dwyer argues for the inclusion of new ideas such as EI in training. Career development literature has connected emotion to career change (Chope 2001), career interventions (Kidd 1998), and job search (Linnehan and Blau 1998).

Other than contrasting views of learning that incorporate emotions with the more dominant, rational views of learning, few issues related to the effect of emotions on learning appear in the literature of adult, career, and career-technical education. Gabriel and Griffins (2002) warn that in the rush to "harness emotion to increase work motivation,"organizations may overlook the fact that many emotions arise from the unconscious and are resistant to learning (p. 214). Clearly, the effect of emotions on learning is an area that needs further exploration and development.

Resources

Carson, K. D., and Carson, P. P. "Career Commitment, Competencies, and Citizenship." *Journal of Career Assessment* 6, no. 2 (Spring 1998): 195-208.
A study of nursing department employees of a small rural hospital revealed that emotional intelligence was positively related to career commitment but not to organizational commitment.

Callahan, J. L., and McCollum, E. E. "Conceptualizations of Emotional Behavior in Organizational Contexts: A Framework for Understanding the Implications of HRD Research and Practice." In "Emotional and Behavior in the Workplace. Symposium 28." *Academy of Human Resource Development (AHRD) Proceedings, Tulsa, OK, February 28-March 4, 2001*, edited by O. A. Aliaga. Baton Rouge, LA: Academy of Human Resource Development, 2001. (ED 453437)
Approaches to the study of emotional behavior in organizations are examined including the interconnection of objective-subjective and emergent-managed continua regarding emotional behavior. Four overlapping approaches (functionalist, interpretivist, dialogic deconstructionist, structural determinist) to emotional behavior practical interventions are presented.

Chope, R. C. "Exploration of the Emotional Avenues of Career Change." Paper presented at the International Career Development Conference, Seattle, Washington, November 2001. http://icdl.uncg.edu/ft/102601-01.html
Emotions associated with rapid changes in today's job market can affect job search, job change, and the process of job placement. Strategies for dealing with the variety of emotions are suggested for career counselors as well as job seekers.

Cobb, C. D., and Mayer, J. D. "Emotional Intelligence: What the Research Says." *Educational Leadership* 58, no. 3 (November 2000): 14-18.
Two models of emotional intelligence exist. The ability model defines EI as a set of abilities and makes claims about the importance of emotional information and potential uses of reasoning well with that information. The mixed model mixes EI as an ability with social competencies, traits, and behaviors and makes claims about how this intelligence can lead to success.

Coutu, D. L. "The Anxiety of Learning." *Harvard Business Review* 80, no. 3 (March 2002): 100-106.
In this interview, Edgar H. Schein explains why anxiety associated with learning interferes with the development of learning organizations. Both learning anxiety and survival anxiety are associated with learning.

Dearborn, K. "Studies in Emotional Intelligence Redefine Our Approach to Leadership Development." *Public Personnel Management* 31, no. 4 (Winter 2002): 523-530.
Emotional intelligence is linked to leadership training as a means of addressing failures in traditional leadership development programs. Accepting the relationship between emotional domains and the skills and competencies needed for leadership is necessary for developing effective learning strategies in leadership development.

Dirkx, J. M. *Transformative Learning and the Journey of Individuation. ERIC Digest no. 223.* Columbus: ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career, and Vocational Education, Center on Education and Training for Employment, the Ohio State University, 2000. (ED 448 305) http://ericacve.org/digests.asp
The deeper emotional and spiritual dimensions of learning that many have suggested are underdeveloped in conceptions of transformative learning are explored.

Druskat, V. U., and Wolff, S. B. "Building the Emotional Intelligence of Groups." *Harvard Business Review* 79, no. 3 (March 2001): 81-90.
Individual emotional intelligence has a group analog that is just as critical to the effectiveness of groups. Teams can boost their overall

performance by developing greater emotional intelligence by paying attention to the emotions of its members, its own group emotions or moods, and the emotions of groups and individuals outside of its boundaries.

Dwyer, B. "Successful Training Strategies for the Twenty-first Century: Using Recent Research on Learning to Provide Effective Training Strategies." *International Journal of Educational Management* 15, no. 6 (2001): 312-318.
Training models should be examined to ensure that they embrace brain-based learning and multiple and emotional intelligence and bring to the training environment an attitude that provides an understanding, empathy, and respect for all learners.

Gabriel, Y., and Griffiths, D. S. "Emotion, Learning, and Organizing." *Learning Organization* 9, no. 5 (2002): 214-221.
Using social constructionist and psychoanalytic ideas, the authors argue that the management of emotions in organizations is problematic and precarious. Some emotions may be contained or redirected but many arise from deeper unconscious sources and are impervious to learning.

Goleman, D. *Emotional Intelligence*. New York, NY: Bantam, 1995.
The concept of emotional intelligence was popularized through this book. In addition to describing EI, the author shows how it can be applied in areas such as relationships and education.

Houghton, T., and Proscio, T. *Hard Work on Soft Skills: Creating a "Culture of Work" in Workforce Development*. Philadelphia, PA: Public/Private Ventures, 2001. (ED 461 737) http://www.ppv.org/pdffiles/softskills.pdf
Four work force development programs are described. The focus is on how they cultivate emotional intelligence or soft skills such as courtesy, teamwork, and self-control. Some general lessons and principles about the culture of work conclude the publication.

Jaeger, A. J. "Job Competencies and the Curriculum: An Inquiry into Emotional Intelligence in Graduate Professional Education." Unpublished paper. Raleigh: North Carolina State University, 2002. (ED 465 341)
A study to investigate the role of emotions in graduate studies found that those students whose curriculum included emotional intelligence significantly improved their EI.

Kidd, J. M. "Emotion: An Absent Presence in Career Theory." *Journal of Vocational Behavior* 52, no. 3 (1998): 275-288.
Argues for a greater emphasis on the role of emotions in career development and shows how the literature on emotion at work can be applied to extend career theory and the theory informing career interventions.

Labouvie-Vief, G. "Emotion, Thought, and Gender." In *Handbook of Emotion, Adult Development, and Aging*, edited by C. Magai and S. H. McFadden. San Diego, CA: Academic Press, 1996.
Two modes of thinking—rational and nonrational—are discussed. Rather than thinking of the modes as oppositional, the author suggests viewing them as interacting with and mutually informing each other. As adult development progresses, rational structures can embrace and contain emotions that at less developed levels could not have been integrated and rational structures can inform emotions.

Leicester, M. "Two Decades of Feminist Thought—and Beyond." *International Journal of Lifelong Education* 20, no. 1-2 (January-April 2001): 55-62.
Emotional intelligence and intuitive understanding are among seven characteristics identified from a review of two decades of feminist writing in adult education. Although the dominant mode of thought has emphasized rational or instrumental forms, alternative ways of thinking include intuition, metaphor, and emotion as means of making valid judgments.

Linnehan, F., and Blau, G. "Exploring the Emotional Side of Job Search Behavior for Younger Workforce Entrants." *Journal of Employment Counseling* 35, no. 3 (September 1998): 98-113.
A study of younger (ages 18- 23) work force entrants found empirical support for two distinct types of job search behavior: detached and interactive. The two dimensions seemed to represent different levels of emotional involvement in the job search process.

Mayer, J. D.; Caruso, D. R.; and Salovey, P. "Emotional Intelligence Meets Traditional Standards for an Intelligence." *Intelligence* 27, no. 4 (2000): 267-298.
An intelligence must meet several standard criteria before it can be considered scientifically legitimate. Results of two studies—one of adults and one of adolescents—revealed that emotional intelligence as measured by the Multifactor Emotional Intelligence Scale meets the classical criteria of a standard intelligence.

Pfeiffer, S. I. "Emotional Intelligence: Popular but Elusive Construct." *Roeper Review* 23, no. 3 (April 2001): 138-142.
Two bodies of writing on emotional intelligence are discussed as illustrative of recent theorizing on EI, and conceptual and measurement problems presently challenging the usefulness of the EI construct are discussed.

Short, D. C. "Analyzing Training from an Emotions Perspective." In "Emotional and Behavior in the Workplace. Symposium 28." *Academy of Human Resource Development (AHRD) Proceedings, Tulsa, OK, February 28-March 4, 2001*, edited by O. A. Aliaga. Baton Rouge, LA: Academy of Human Resource Development, 2001. (ED 453 437)
Empirical and theoretical literature on emotions is used to analyze incidents in the training context as a means of improving understanding the role of emotions in training. Training is not solely a rational process and emotions can both support and hinder the performance of trainees and the trainer, the learning that takes place, and the effectiveness of course design.

Taylor, E. W. "Rationality and Emotions in Transformative Learning Theory: A Neurobiological Perspective." In *37th Adult Education Research Conference Proceedings, Tampa, Florida, May 16-19, 1996*, compiled by H. Reno and M. Witte. Tampa: University of South Florida, 1996. (ED 419 087)
This paper supports the criticism of transformative learning as a rationally driven process by exploring the emotional nature of rationality from the field of neurobiology. A physiological explanation of the interdependent relationship of emotion and reason is offered. The findings encourage the promotion of emotional literacy in the practice of transformative learning.

Weiss, R. P. "Emotion and Learning." *Training & Development* 54, no. 11 (November 2000): 44-48.
Recent research conducted by neurologists and educators shows a strong link between emotion and reason, feelings and thoughts. The more emotionally engaged a learner is, the more likely he or she is to learn.

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